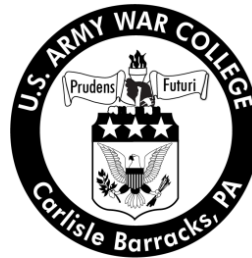


Strategy Research Project

Regionalization: The Cure for an Ailing Intelligence Career Field

by

Colonel Enrique Camacho
United States Army



United States Army War College
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Regionalization: The Cure for an Ailing Intelligence Career Field

In an era of declining budgets, you have to absolutely know what you do.

—GEN James F. Amos,
35th Commandant of the Marine Corps¹

In the mid-1980s, America's automobile industry was in crisis. It was producing cars Americans didn't want, bulging with inventories, and unable to imagine a better way. Attempting to understand its slipping competitive edge to Japan, a group of U.S. auto industry leaders took an overseas trip. They toured factories and heard lectures on managerial and manufacturing processes. They returned home, unimpressed because Japanese systems didn't look anything like American hallmarks of manufacturing success. What they missed was that the Japanese had been perfecting a "just-in-time" inventory system, dramatically reducing the need for in-process inventories throughout the manufacturing system.² Over time, the Japanese auto industry would force the U.S. automobile industry to change many of their mental models in order to compete.

The Army's Military Intelligence (MI) enterprise sits in a similar position today, building products that few people want and lacking the vision to change. An element of the enterprise in particular disarray is the Army's Strategic Intelligence Officer or Functional Area 34 (FA34 for brevity). A career field originally designed to provide regional and analytic expertise; it has devolved as a bill payer for MI throughout the enterprise. In doing so, the Army has lost a critical skill, and the career field sits in disarray. As the Army's MI enterprise copes with multiple issues in this period of fiscal constraint and uncertainty, the FA34 career field can be a critical force multiplier if properly developed and organized.

This paper establishes that the FA34 career field must organize regionally and re-focus in order to effectively provide the Army with much needed regional and analytic expertise. The branch's current path, if left unattended, will languish in obscurity and fail to deliver unique products that appeal to Army leaders and meet the strategic challenges facing our nation.

To begin this exploration, it is important to recognize the significance of strategic intelligence. "Over the past 11 years of continuous combat, the Army made great strides at the tactical and operational level of war."³ Abandoned in the immediacy for actionable intelligence is strategic intelligence. The Army's ability to deliver thoughtful assessments has diminished precisely when the character of modern conflict demands it most.

"Consumers may not always call for strategic intelligence, but they will always need it.

We must never neglect it."⁴

Understanding the value of strategic intelligence leads to a careful examination of the root causes of an ailing discipline. These symptoms manifest themselves in arbitrary manning decisions and flawed mental models which foster confusion within the Army's intelligence leadership, making reform extremely difficult to envision. However, opportunities exist to reestablish the FA34 as the vanguard for analysis and a contributing agent for regional expertise and depth. The path to successfully build a competent cadre with upward mobility only requires a vision, for "clarity of vision and steadfastness of purpose require no funding."⁵ An established vision for a FA34 will offer recommendations to shape and synchronize the career field with Army's 2020 vision.

These recommendations include some dramatic cultural changes within the branch. To successfully transform the FA34, the Army's MI leadership must look to a more centralized approach to the apportionment and disposition of its personnel. Also key in this makeover is the fresh look at the career field and its path for progression. Most similar example of a "strategic intelligence analysis" is the Army's "strategic scout" or Foreign Area Officer (FA48). Much can be learned and modeled from the FA48 career field to enhance FA34 effectiveness. This paper offers some characteristics of FA48 that FA34s should embrace and in some cases, imitate. Finally, there exists an opportunity to think creatively for FA34s and build opportunities for a long productive and fulfilling career cycle. Doing so will retain our officers longer and keep them interested in the career, while providing unique prospects within the military intelligence enterprise.

Strategic Intelligence - A Lost Art

In January 2010, Major General Flynn, in conjunction with Captain Matt Pottinger and Paul Batchelor published a paper titled, *Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan*. A controversial piece, it highlighted several deficiencies and captured some useful observations. One notable observation was "US intelligence officer and analysts can do little but shrug in response to high level decision-makers seeking the knowledge, analysis, and information they need to wage a successful counterinsurgency."⁶ In fairness to the many intelligence professionals who worked in Iraq and Afghanistan, commanders demanded their intelligence enterprise dedicate a preponderance of its energies to lethal targeting and force protection. When Improvised Explosive Device (IED) strikes routinely killed soldiers, the urgency pressed upon vast intelligence networks to find the perpetrator should not go underappreciated.

Likewise, demands from the Global War on Terrorism generated an industry of analysts who plowed through data to establish networks, patterns of life, and "find, fix and finish" opportunities.⁷ "Consequently, by default, those analytic topics that feel somehow too grand, or too distant in time and place to matter immediately, tend to get ignored."⁸

The experiences of Iraq and Afghanistan developed a majority of all Army intelligence specialists and provided the training, education, and validating grounds for their growth. MI professionals and FA34s, consumed with the tactical fight, let their intelligence skills diminish in the immediacy of actionable intelligence.

These experiences are not unique within the Army. The Army relies heavily on the national intelligence enterprise for strategic insight and warning. Yet "very few employees of the IC would say they are working to advance the implementation of the official National Security Strategy.... Instead, much of today's intelligence is tactical and tangential."⁹ In a survey of hundreds of intelligence community analysts at the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) Center for the Study of Intelligence (CSI), the surveyed personnel offered these insights:¹⁰

- Our products have become so specific, so tactical that our thinking has become tactical. We're losing our strategic edge because we're focused on today's issues.
- Velocity isn't a substitute for quality. We've gotten rid of the real analytic products that we used to make, and now just report on current events.

The Army, which leans heavily on the national intelligence agencies, must contend with a very inexperienced and strategically dull workforce. "One result, warned Carl W. Ford Jr., a former assistant secretary of state for intelligence and research, is that 'we haven't done strategic intelligence for so long that most of our analysts don't know how to do it anymore.'"¹¹

The Army's move to a more regionally aligned force will only increase the need for strategic intelligence analysis as its wartime focus shifts to prevent, shape, and win strategies. To effectively shape an Area of Operations (AOR), a Geographic Combatant Commander (CCDR) must accurately understand his environment and take advantage of opportunities that may be "hidden" within the larger dynamic of the strategic environment.¹² The FA34 career field is ideally suited to assist in this task.

Interestingly, the other services - Navy, Air Force, or Marines - have no equivalent to the Army's FA34 career field. Their intelligence professionals serve at strategic level assignments, often with no additional education or training. The Air Force and Navy can afford to accept risk in the area of strategic intelligence because their orientation is in the domain of sea, air and space. The Army cannot afford this luxury because it remains the dominant force in the Human Domain.¹³ "Humans are interlopers in the air, on the sea, and in space; temporary occupants, maintained there through various technologies."¹⁴ The Army stands unique among the services because it is the premier land power force deterring aggression, responding to crisis, defeating an enemy and influencing actions of others in ways that reduce the inevitable tensions of the international system.¹⁵

The Joint Force will face actors who view the world through different lenses, and it must resist judging the world as if it operated along the same principles and values that drive America.¹⁶ A competent strategic intelligence cadre can provide the nuanced insights required to make sense of regional areas that can rapidly become a combination of combat, governance, and civil security.¹⁷ Unfortunately, distraction and uncertainty have limited the FA34s contributions.

Discontinuity in the Force

To establish a strategic intelligence capability requires the Army's MI community to break its organizational cultural impasse and to do so with a sense of urgency. The ongoing trend within MI contends that both FA34 and Army's Military Intelligence Officer (BR35) provide quality intelligence through similar means. This attitude does little to address the glaring deficiencies in the Army's ability to provide mature strategic analysis, and is reflective of a complacent organizational culture. Most senior leaders recognize the need for major change, but half of the "team" thinks the status quo remains acceptable.¹⁸

Identity crisis best sums up the state of the FA34 career field. A survey of FA34s revealed a consistent theme. Ninety percent of FA34 officers expressed a lack of understanding or vision of their career field as the greatest source of frustration.¹⁹ Newly minted or seasoned FA34s do not know or understand the core functions or utilization of a strategic intelligence officer. Sentiments such as these reflect the overwhelming majority of the FA34 population:²⁰

- Few could describe the branch as a whole, but seemed to think they were doing something non-standard and only spoke of their experience.
- No clear definition of what an FA34 is/does so I don't know exactly what I'm supposed to be doing nor do I know how to communicate my skill set to the chain of command.

The MI leadership has long recognized this shortfall and taken several efforts to correct this deficiency. COL John Angevine, the senior FA34 in 2012, organized a Council of FA34 Colonels in 2006 to help provide direction and guidance for the career field. FA34 leaders held a Washington DC based workshop in early 2006 to establish a purpose, unique functions, and vision for the career field.²¹ In a desperate move the last

Council of Colonels' meeting notes suggested, "all FA34s need to sell their leadership, peers, and subordinates on the value of FA 34s. Currently, senior IC leaders have different opinions of FA34s – good and bad."²²

Other messages and data calls by the Office of the Chief of Military Intelligence (OCMI) and Department of the Army G2 tried addressing this identity crisis, but all have fallen short of providing definite direction or guidance, thereby preventing true organizational change. In fact, attempts to clarify the roles have only added to the uncertainty. For example, a message from the OCMI office in 2006 sought to define the similarities and differences between BR35 and FA34. Rather than clarifying the roles, the message perpetuated the identity crisis and caused great consternation within the FA34 community.²³ Parts of the email described the BR35 as the MI Pentathlete who has commanded and is well versed in all matters of MI, while the FA34 officer was characterized as one who would not compete for command or G2 position but have repetitive assignments at theater, joint, and strategic levels.²⁴

Perhaps the most telling state of the career field came from MG Gregg Potter, the Army Chief of MI and proponent of FA34, in late 2012. During an introduction talk to a newly assessed batch of Strategic Intelligence Officers, MG Potter questioned the validity of the branch. Unsure of the differences between FA34 and BR35, he surmised that it may be more useful to merge the two career fields and help with the manning issues confronting MI.²⁵ This identity crisis is well known within MI, but few have looked at the issue systematically and offered a comprehensive solution.

Stuck and Misdirected

Since FA34 began as a manning solution to ease MI of Joint Requirements and provide opportunities for Combat Arms officers, the vision for the branch has been left to

the interpretation of its members. That membership has changed considerably from 1997 to present. At its onset, the career field maintained a ratio of 1:1 of MI to Combat Arms officers, providing a blend of operations and intelligence experience into the career field.²⁶ However, from 2002 to 2008 FA34 accessions integrated predominantly Combat Arms officers, changing the face of the FA34 officer cadre. The result of the accessions produced a mostly white male work force (from Combat Arms branches), and a seven year period when zero female officers were accessed into FA34.²⁷ The demographic shift, coupled with war time predominance of tactical intelligence, contributed considerably to the inability of the Army or MI to arrive at a consensus for the strategic intelligence career field or build a coherent vision for the FA34.

It is clear that the Army's intelligence structure suffers from what Peter Senge, a renowned expert in business management, describes as a mental model deficiency. The Army has an intelligence organization oriented from lessons based on ten years of combat. During this time, MI adapted its culture and processes to meet commander's needs. The mental models ingrained in the MI culture revolve around situational reporting, lethal targeting, and force protection. The FA34 career field is particularly susceptible due to its demographic and recent experiences. The mental models built over the last ten years have become so entrenched that leaders can only envision processes they've experienced through combat. "As the Detroit automakers [of 1980's] demonstrated, entire industries can develop chronic misfits between mental models and reality. In some ways, close-knit industries [MI in particular] are especially vulnerable because all the member companies look to each other for standards of best practice."²⁸ Shared experiences in this case are failing the FA34 and hindering its ability to provide

a coherent vision and direction. Some are content with the status quo and embrace the mantra “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” But it is broken, and it needs to be fixed.

Counterpoint – Status Quo Works

One may disagree and convincingly argue that ambiguity and flexibility is the strength of the FA34 career field. Promotion rates compliment this line of thought as FA34s have competed well for promotion. But it does little to break the distinction between BR35 and FA34 or establish a need for an independent functional area. If the argument continues that BR35 can do everything the FA34 can do, and vice versa (save command), then why have a separate branch? By the way, this argument only favors the BR35 community. The lack of distinction only penalizes the FA34. Short of one or two truly gifted FA34s, the career field has been relegated to secondary status.

FA34 cannot command MI units placing them at a distinct disadvantage when competing for choice assignments at the 06 level. Placement of FA34s in key jobs remains a problem, and on at least three occasions FA34s have not even passed the screening requirements for choice G2/J2 jobs simply based on command biased criteria.²⁹ Furthermore, the lack of distinction does little to improve the Army’s analytic and regional expertise, as intelligence officers continue to pursue jobs that strengthen their command portfolios at the expense of building expertise.

That aside, if the career fields are indistinguishable, wouldn't it be far more efficient and productive to consolidate the two and quit pretending they are separate disciplines? This logic would support MG Potter’s assessment which he delivered to the newly minted class of FA34s in November of 2012, where he challenged the notion of differentiation. There indeed should be a difference, one that offers an officer clear direction and fulfilling work.

To borrow a marketing analogy, brand to brand (B2B) marketing is critical when operating in a resource constrained environment. “If left unattended, individual managers will each do their own ad hoc marketing. The result will be a hodgepodge of corporate logos, taglines, and packaging.”³⁰ Incoherency builds confusion and disorganization, and eventually the brand dies off. Continuing with the market analogy, BR35 and FA34 should not be seen as competitors but complimentary to one another. If intelligence (BR35) were the PC manufacturer then FA34 should resemble the Intel chip. “Intel is the ultimate ingredient brand. It makes zero sales to end consumers, yet Intel built a consumer demand pull for its chips that required every PC manufacturer to incorporate them and to advertise Intel inside on their products and in their ads.”³¹ The goal must be to establish FA34 as the ultimate ingredient brand, complementary to MI but distinct and in high demand.

A Vision for FA34 – The Regionalization Argument

Vision is perhaps the single most important element of any significant organizational change or adjustment. John P. Kotter, a globally recognized expert on small business, identifies vision as the critical element that breaks through forces supporting the status quo. A vision serves three important functions: it clarifies the general direction of change, motivates people to take action in the right direction, and helps coordinate the actions of people.³² Since the roles and functions of FA34 are misunderstood and ambiguous within MI and widely throughout the Army, the existing vision statement for FA34 as identified in Army Pamphlet 600-3 provides insufficient direction:

The Strategic Intelligence officer is an agile, national and theater level, interagency expert, who leads, plans and directs all-source analysis, intelligence systems, and intelligence policy and programs, supporting key

decision makers, policymakers and war fighters in an interagency, Joint coalition, and combined environment.³³

A BR35 might argue that their skill sets at the Field Grade level enable them to function with greater depth and breadth at the national and theater level. That may be true if tenure were the sole measure of effectiveness. A BR35 has a minimum five-year head start on any newly assessed FA34. This initial experience inequality is precisely why the FA34 career field needs to focus its population rather than continuing to compete against BR35 strengths.

Regionalization is not mentioned in the Army's publication, but regionalization should be the cornerstone of a FA34. Regionalization can be the single most distinguishing characteristic separating a BR35 from a FA34. The reason regionalization is such a critical component at the national and theater level is based on three important factors. First, regional appreciation continues to plague the Army as one of the greatest weaknesses in its intelligence arsenal. Second, most significant intelligence and policy making institutions align and orient themselves regionally. And thirdly, the Army of 2020 embraces a regionally oriented posture.³⁴

Military intelligence is often criticized as being too military. MG Flynn's *Fixing Intelligence* paper captures many common indictments, such as enemy centric focus, reactive collection efforts, and overly classified domains.³⁵ "MI officers and specialists are trained in the United States, to track purely "military" activities. And in conventional wars – wars between professional standing armies – it does this reasonably well."³⁶ But to understand the invisible side of conflict – the political warfare, local cultural/religious perspectives and macro/microeconomics – an officer must spend years working within the region and studying within the network of people with long dwell time and deep

historical understanding. "When foreign areas are involved, in-depth expertise is required, which is what strategic intelligence provides. Without the insights of deep expertise, a strategy is not much more than an abstract theory."³⁷

This in-depth regional understanding has long eluded MI professionals. The Army's MI community continuously defers this expertise to the Foreign Area Officer or national elements of the Intelligence Community (IC). To effectively interact with the pools of Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) civilians, Department of State (DoS) regional specialists, academicians, think tanks and Nongovernmental Organizations (NGO) requires an investment of intelligence professionals who spend their careers nurturing those relationships. One of MG Flynn's principle initiatives for intelligence improvements in Afghanistan directed the analysts to divide their work along geographic lines instead of functional lines to develop a comprehensive understanding of the districts governance, development, and stability.³⁸ It makes sense to regionalize the FA34 for without regionalization, the Army's ability to provide superior strategic intelligence will continue to lack credibility and expertise at a time when the Joint Operating Environment guarantees greater volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.

Perhaps the most compelling point for regionalizing the FA34 rests in the fact that the US intelligence and policy system is built around regionalization. Every national intelligence agency has regional offices to match its policy counterparts. The policy community, to include the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and DoS, is also organized and managed along regional lanes. In order to effectively communicate in that arena, Army intelligence needs an effective cadre of experts with long term

established relationships. The Army has formal connections with the regional offices through the J5 (Plans/Policy) and Foreign Area Officers (FA48), but its intelligence continuity has always been haphazard. Although the FA48 is a regional expert, his knowledge of the IC is often cursory, while his analytic skills remain secondary to his collection and security cooperation mission. Conversely, planners although superb tend to forge personal contacts and build small circles of IC trusted agents, but these often lack the Army's intelligence expert capable of providing the rich context of a regional issues complemented with a broad understanding of intelligence.

If doubts still persist over regionalizing the FA34, consider the Army's vision for 2020. "The Army is a regionally engaged and globally responsive; an indispensable partner and provider of a full range of capabilities to Combatant Commanders in a Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multi-national environment."³⁹ This regional orientation requires the Army to invest in regional specialization beyond the FA48. The BR35 career field demands too much of its officers in tactical and managerial roles to attain any true sense of regional expertise. Whereas BR35 can now make an argument that its intelligence depth will always rival those of FA34, this position would no longer hold if FA34 were regionalized.

When a BR35 enters a new job in a regional analytic center or national intelligence agency, they are often strangers in a strange land for at least a year. No sooner does the BR35 acquire an appreciable understanding of a particular area, the Army ushers them off to a new branch qualifying position. This type of career progression keeps the MI and the BR35 healthy; however, it does little to strengthen the

Army's regional and analytic expertise. The Strategic Intelligence officer is ideally suited to close this gap and play an important role in this process.

Accepting the regionalization argument will require an organizational change in MI and FA34 culture. From it a new vision may emerge, one that recognizes a career path and appreciates unconventional assignments. With regionalization as the cornerstone of the functional area this vision provides the necessary azimuth for change:

Army Strategic Intelligence Officers are Soldiers grounded in the Profession of Arms; who provide leadership and all-source analytic expertise at the national, theater, Joint coalition, interagency, intergovernmental and combined environment; who provide regional analytic expertise; and who offer unique war fighting competencies - interagency expertise, non-governmental agency depth, and research mastery –that are critical to supporting key decision makers, policymakers and war fighters.

Once the Army embraces regionalization of the FA34s, a clear brand of intelligence professional will emerge, one that compliments the MI effort and provides much needed analytic and regional expertise to the force.

Debunking the Functional Argument

Many argue (even those within the FA34 career field) that FA34s should also have functional lines of expertise. In an era of plenty, that would certainly merit consideration. But under diminished defense budgets every resource must know its job. Additionally, there is a myth that regional experts lack understanding of functional areas, such as proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), illicit trafficking, or illicit financing. Truth is, one cannot obtain regional expertise without knowledge of functional areas as they pertain to the political, military, social and economic framework of the region. The issue is not one of understanding; it's one of detail or level of

understanding. “The information needed to disrupt a single terrorist is different than the information needed to dismantle a terrorist organization.”⁴⁰ A regional expert is acutely aware of the functional activities at play in his area of study.

This is particularly true in the counter-terrorism fight. For example, a military strategic analyst working the North Africa region is acutely aware of the Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) problem set. He may not know the details of each cell leader, their locations, phone numbers, or addresses, but he does understand the problem in a greater context. Intelligence professionals who work counter terrorism know that operational/tactical level intelligence absorbs tremendous resources. The close knit community that works these issues operates at a fast pace and tempo, and it requires highly sensitive and classified information. Consequently, the strategic intelligence officer should not be expected to lead the charge on the find, fix, and finish intelligence requirements. Functionalizing a FA34 in any area would detract from the regional expertise of the career field and dilute the brand name. It would further siphon off resources necessary to build a regional cadre with depth and breadth.

In addition to functional elements, such as WMD and CT, MI leaders may wonder if the FA34 should develop a functional line of expertise within the intelligence cycle, such as collection management. Analysts who develop expert knowledge in a region take approximately three years to build their historical data bank, gain credibility, and refine their analytic skills so that they can synthesize information. Similarly, collection management expertise takes years to cultivate. As such, part-time efforts often result in amateurish results. Time spent in other functions not only detracts from building the regional expert but dilutes the career field specialty.

A regional all-source analyst inherently develops a working knowledge of the intelligence cycle. Experienced analysts develop functional skills through application in order to generate a finished product. Since the analyzed product remains the endgame of the intelligence cycle, a seasoned FA34 develops skills necessary to lead and direct an enterprise through his application and use of the intelligence system. Therefore, at the Colonel level a FA34 can confidently compete against his counterparts for critical assignments such as G2, J2, and Joint Intelligence Operation Center (JIOC) Commanders. These assignments demand intelligence competencies across the intelligence cycle. A FA34 will have spent ten years leading efforts in all phases of the cycle in order to arrive at an analytic conclusion.

Road Map for FA34 Success/ Recommendations

Keeping pace with Army's Regionally Aligned Force (RAF) concept, MI and the FA34 community must act with urgency to deliver a quality product by Full Operational Capability (FOC) for the RAF concept which is targeted in 2016.⁴¹ A typical approach has little chance of affecting true transformation as legacy structures and culture often weigh down, rather than facilitate, necessary change.⁴² To build a brand that enhances the Army's strategic intelligence capability requires some risk taking and departure from the status quo. The following recommendations establish a blue print for building a career field that develops adaptive leaders who embrace the future and value lifelong learning.

Strategically Disposition FA34

Current methods for allocating FA34 billets across the force are flawed, inherently self-serving, and lack deliberate vision. The Army relies on data calls throughout the Joint force and national agencies to validate existing positions, find

growth where needed, and reduce requirements where prudent. Expectedly, these data calls do not achieve a coherent posturing of the Army's FA34 cadre. Instead, organizations hedge their bets on which MI component can fill their manpower shortfalls: BR35 or FA34. If the organization believes their manpower assets will survive the data call, then they will inherently allocate according to the available manpower pool. Organizations, particularly in resource constrained environments, place a premium on protectionism and self-preservation over honesty.

Regionalizing the FA34 cadre solves the haphazard nature of FA34 billet allocation. With a regionally aligned cadre, the Department of the Army (DA) G2 and OCMI possess the ability to evaluate the environment and allocate FA34s through an honest assessment. For example, Figure 1 offers a rudimentary method of smart regional allocation. The graph demonstrates the areas at greatest risk for regional instability juxtaposed against those regions with tremendous hard and soft power capability.⁴³ Clearly Asia and Europe offer the greatest potential for investing in strong and capable partners, a primary goal of the National Security Strategy of the United States of America (NSS).⁴⁴ Meanwhile, Sub Saharan Africa presents the most likely area of instability. More interestingly and requiring greater study are the regions where the delta between instability and security potential are highest, for they present the greatest potential opportunities for engagement or challenges due to conflict.

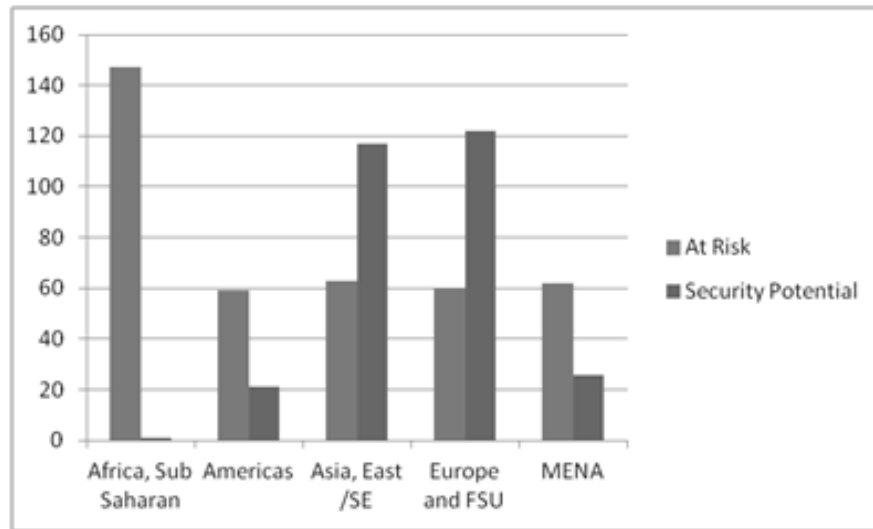


Figure 1: At Risk vs. Security Potential by Region

Figure 1 is not intended to challenge the numerous national and academic models, which are far more comprehensive. It simply provides an illustrative model to smartly apportion the Army's strategic analytic intelligence assets. As the Joint Force presses the Army for analytic resources, a deliberative quantitative and qualitative approach provides Army MI leadership the flexibility to build, assign, and develop its analytic manpower. Careful management of the workforce will keep the Army's pulse on regions of the world where "large conflicts are often precipitated by relatively insignificant crises in out-of-the-way places."⁴⁵ FA34 manning decisions should not be left to the crisis of the day or organizational survival, but a process governed by deliberate consideration and smart allocation.

Model for Initial Force Generation

Accepting the model approach leads to smart force generation. Ideally, a three-year force generation cycle would build an initial pool of experts, while affording flexibility to adjust for environmental changes. Provided is an example of a three year

cycle which corresponds to the expected accessions through Fiscal Year 15. Fiscal constraints realized, the FA34 branch anticipates assessing no more than 25 officers in the out years. The initial assignment for a FA34 is critical and should embrace two elements. The first component of development should be towards refining analytic skills, and second directed at garnering IC expertise, understanding and networks. This model demonstrates an initial assignment path which properly generates FA34s with skills that make him a force multiplier. It also provides the framework for billeting within the IC (listed agencies fully spelled out in endnotes).⁴⁶

Table 1: Cycle 1 (Should be Implemented in FY14) – Base Year 1 Build

	Americas	Africa	MENA ⁴⁷	Europe/RUS	Asia
DIA	1	1	1	1	1
NSA		1	1		1
NGA		1	1		
NGIC		1	1		1
DOS (INR)	1	1	1	1	1
Treasury			1		1
CIA		1	1		1
DEA	1	1			
Totals	3	7	7	2	6

Table 2: Cycle 2 (Implemented in FY15) – Base Year 2 Build

	Americas	Africa	MENA	Europe/RUS	Asia
DIA	1	1	1	1	1
NSA	1			1	
NGA	1			1	1
NGIC	1			1	
DOS (INR)	1	1	1	1	1
Treasury			1		1
CIA	1		1	1	
DEA			1	1	1
Total	6	2	5	7	5

Table 3: Cycle 3 for FY16 (Flex Cycle, Adjusted every 3rd year to Match Environment)

	Americas	Africa	MENA	Europe/RUS	Asia
DIA	1	2		1	2
NSA		1	1		1
NGA		1	1		
NGIC		1	1		1
DOS (INR)	1	1	1	1	1
Treasury					1
CIA		1	1	1	1
DEA	1				
Total	3	7	5	3	7

Table 4: Regional FA34 Experts Build FY16 – Demonstrates Base and Priority Effort

	SOUTH/NORTHCOM	AFRICOM	CENTCOM	EUCOM	PACOM
Base build	9	9	12	9	11
Flex year	12	16	17	12	18

Using a model to frame the environment and a three-year force generation cycle allows the Army to adjust its Strategic Intelligence force in a smart and deliberate way. No longer would the FA34 work force be determined by arbitrary data calls and skewed organizational thinking. This new process would bring a methodological approach to intelligently apportion and disposition the Army's FA34 assets. Extending this model beyond the FA34 initial entry cycle requires a bit more analysis, but it is easy to imagine a cycle between regional offices at the IC, Combatant Commands, Army Enterprise, and institution building locations.

Recruit Smartly, Assess Accordingly

Regionalization and smart allocation would, in turn, drive better recruitment and career management. As MI builds its calculated outlook on regional affairs, the proponent and Human Resource (HR) have at their disposal an opportunity to shape the FA34 population to meet those needs. Today, the Army accesses FA34s into the

career field based primarily on the officer's strength of file and willingness to volunteer. It is a "push" system, where candidates apply, get screened and fill billets; few opportunities exist to "pull" from the Army inventory. However, if the FA34 is regionalized, it provides HR flexibility to actually pull talent from the Army and aggressively target officers with unique regional experience, interagency knowledge, linguistic backgrounds or national level experience. Leveraging the Voluntary Transfer Incentive Program (VTIP) would enable the process and allow the HR team more flexibility in shaping the force.

VTIP also affords the opportunity to closely partner with and share in the FA48 application process. During the accessions process, an exceptional FA34 candidate may lack an open billet; the same may apply to a FA48 candidate. Close sharing of candidates may allow for some cross pollination and potentially the retention of officers with unique experiences. Officers may find greater opportunities to use their skills in a rewarding way. Understandably, this may cause some friction between the branches as they compete for the best candidates, but in the end the Army wins by expanding opportunities for those officers who enjoy this line of work.

Concerns that regionalization will confound recruiting and limit the assignments process, deserves some mention. Since the FA34 population is considerably smaller than the FA48 (almost 1/5 the size),⁴⁸ FA34 must take a border approach to its areas of concentration in order to maintain flexibility in the system. FA48 trains, develops and assigns its officers to support nine areas of concentration based on the historical cultural centers of the world. The HR effort within FA48 also saddled with recruiting and assignment challenges manages the process fairly well. Adjusting the FA34 regional

focus to five areas, which incidentally matches the number of DoD Regional Centers for Security Study,⁴⁹ maintains a proportionately manageable manpower pool for recruiting and assignments. Furthermore, focusing the effort on five regions provides more flexibility and greater opportunity to maneuver without losing regional expertise.

FA48s Provide an Instructive Model for Integration and Employment

FA48 career field is a model to closely follow. The advertised FA34 officer is part of the "strategic triumvirate" of FA34, FA48 and FA59 (Strategist) that provide dedicated strategic plans, intelligence and area expertise to the Army.⁵⁰ If the FA48 is the strategic scout, then the FA34 is the strategic analyst who works in conjunction with the scout. A powerful force multiplier, the FA48 has successfully built its brand and competencies. The demand for FA48 officers often exceeds the functional area's capacity to generate new recruits and remains one of the few growth areas within the Army.⁵¹

The FA48 bins its workforce into five main areas to build expertise and credentials.⁵² With modifications, these five areas may serve as the model for developing, assigning and building a competent FA34 cadre.

Political / Military Adviser

Upon completion of their initial training the FA48 generally serves in an assignment at the Combatant Command (CCMD), Joint Staff (JS), Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) or Army HQs to get their feet wet and gain experience and credibility. The FA34s initial entry position should follow the model explained above in the three year cycle. There are approximately 93 FA34s serving at DIA and NGA. The three-year entry plan consumes 75 billets across a greater segment of the IC and leaves plenty of room for adjustments.⁵³ Following the three-year cycle plan expands the breadth and depth of the Army's MI awareness across the interagency. It also

accomplishes several things for the career field. First, and most importantly, it integrates all new FA34s into the national intelligence system and provides them an opportunity to gain knowledge of the intelligence process. Secondly, it ensures them a solid foundation on the national systems collection capability. At NSA for example, an analyst sitting at a regional desk is exposed to the full measure of national systems generating raw traffic.

It is vital that the FA34 serve in the analytic regional office. Anything short of the regional analytic position immediately derails the intent. FA34s cannot be considered a Strategic Intelligence officer unless they've served at a national intelligence producing source. The Army and FA34 receiving organizations do a disservice to the functional area if they do not provide the proper opportunities for the officer to build the background and experience required to analyze and write at the strategic level.

Concerns that FA34 will become a manpower pool for the interagency should not worry Army leaders. Creative solutions exist which may align the officer with a CCMD, while at duty in the national enterprise. Ideally, an officer would serve at a national enterprise while under the direction of a CCMD. His tasking and producing would be driven by the CCMD using national expertise. It would be a win-win situation. The national system wins because reporting and production stay steady or increase while they also undergo reductions. Likewise, the Army wins because its assets are focused on leveraging national capabilities to generate relevant intelligence.

Country Team

The FA48 then generally serves on a country team in theater as an attaché or security cooperation effort; here is where the FA48 really builds their expertise and validation as the Army's Strategic Scout. The FA34s proving ground should be at the CCMD or one of DoD's five Regional Centers for Security Study (RCSS). Within the

CCMD the FA34 should serve at an analytic regional desk or within a plans shop, helping to craft the Intelligence Annex and intelligence support plan. Their experience at a national center empowers them to speak intelligently on the national enterprise, analyze and write at the graduate level, and reach back to a network of professionals.

During the FA34s tenure at the CCMD, the Army must maintain its vision and integrity of the career field and avoid billet filling throughout the JIOC enterprise. Understandably, there will always be a need for more collection, targeting, information and requirements management, or Watch Center help. Although a FA34 might have the requisite skills, every effort should be made to protect their regional focus.

The Army's FA34 proponent should include a funded program for its analysts to spend time in their region of focus, as a fundamental aspect towards building a competent cadre. A component to the FA34s integration at the CCMD and RCSS should include a program for in-country experience. Several CCMDs have programs to deploy their analysts into theater for thirty to ninety days. This should be the rule, not the exception, for the FA34. In-country exposure and expertise can only enhance analysis and advice. All too often the power of experience manifests itself in the planning room when heated arguments reach an impasse and one individual stands and says, "Well I've been there and let me tell you what I have experienced." His credibility is instantaneous, as a noted philosopher and scholar once said, "A man with an experience is seldom at the mercy of a man with an argument."⁵⁴ The experience only strengthens the FA34s ability to appreciate the environment and provide the depth and breadth so missing in the Army's analytic enterprise.

The RCSS are vital to the FA34 field because they are designed as the Secretary of Defense's "study of security issues relating to a specified geographic region of the world; and serve as a forum for bilateral and multilateral research, communication, and exchange of ideas involving military and civilian participants."⁵⁵ Here is where the FA34 expands his rolodex beyond the IC. During the officers initial assignment within the IC, he establishes a trusted network of intelligence professionals. While at the RCSS, the officer expands his relationships to include interagency expertise, academic centers, think tank specialists, and NGOs actively participating in the region. The RCSS open tremendous opportunities for FA34s to capture a full appreciation of the security environment and how their analysis contributes to strategic decision-making. More importantly, the RCSS exposes the FA34 to the vast network of interagency, intergovernmental, and academic institutions with regional knowledge. Carving out billets for adequate representation across all five RCSS may be a challenge, but it's a critical element to realizing the FA34 brand. If planned properly, the RCSS provide an opportunity for growth and progression with the FA34 career path.

Enterprise

The FA48 then serves as a member of the enterprise on the Army staff, Army Service Component Command, or OSD. Here is where the Army gains true benefit from the career field. The analytic and regional skills developed over five to seven years of focus, positions the FA34 as a true force multiplier. With seasoned FA34s, deliberately assigned and carefully managed, MI's investment into a competent cadre with unique skills is validated. The regional knowledge, analytic expertise, interagency astuteness, and intergovernmental continuity compliments the Army's Unified Land Operation

doctrine nicely, for Army doctrine emphasizes the need to synchronize capabilities with the interagency, intergovernmental partners, and multinational forces.⁵⁶

Education and Institution

The FA48 serves in academia such as the War College and National Defense University, and Human Resources Command to strengthen the force. The Army's MI can benefit most from a seasoned FA34 in developing more educational models to enhance analysis. Analytics have traditionally been a weakness in the Army MI vocation. MI officers seldom serve as analysts; most manage people and processes and lead organizations but seldom have time to critically think and analyze information to generate intelligence. Therefore, the Army often undervalues analytic education in favor of training.

The difference between education and training is subtle but important. "In the simplest terms, training is the process of skills acquisition, while education is the process of knowledge acquisition."⁵⁷ The Army spends a considerable amount of time teaching soldiers repeatable processes to a recognizable standard. It's important that the soldier understands the standard operating procedures associated with the production of the common operating picture, the short term assessment, and the daily activity report. Often neglected are those skills needed to critically evaluate sources and effectively use the information for understanding or meaning. Education is the "critical thinking and reasoning skills necessary to synthesize and integrate knowledge."⁵⁸

FA34s are woefully underrepresented at the Army's education centers with less than three officers serving in areas that shape our future MI leaders. Assigning FA34s at the National Intelligence University (NIU) will ensure the new cadre of FA34s start well,

while positioning a cadre of FA34s at the U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence (USAICoE) in Fort Huachuca will help the Army strengthen its analytic education.

Deployments

FA48 serve in combat theaters, often augmenting their counterparts, even if they are unfamiliar with the region. Latin American specialists have successfully served in Iraq because their skills easily migrated to the situation. The same must apply to FA34s. They must have opportunities to lead and deploy in appropriate capacities. FA34s can certainly lead combined and joint intelligence organizations, but they can also serve as the nucleus of any strategic-level advisory group. Lessons learned from advisory groups deployed to Iraq depict a process forged through trial and error. Some documented shortfalls expressed during the Iraq experience included: a lack of cultural awareness, understanding of the intelligence community, analytic tradecraft shortfalls, and subject matter expertise.⁵⁹ Clearly, the FA34 community should play an integral role in any partner intelligence advising assistance efforts. Since the Army's vision includes greater partner security assistance, the FA34 cadre assigned at USAICoE would be ideally suited to facilitate doctrine development in the intelligence advisory group and shape a deployability concept.

Unconventional Skill Development - Energize the Force

To become that ultimate ingredient, like the Intel chip, the FA34 will need to embrace skill sets that do not resonate well in the MI community. Building a historical practitioners mind will aide in understanding current trends in proper perspective. Acquiring the knowledge of librarians puts sources such as the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, which has: up-to-date subject indexes of congressional documents, social science publications, statistics, laws, and biographical directories, at

the finger tips of the strategic analyst.⁶⁰ The student of research techniques subscribes to the principles in *The Modern Researcher*, by Jacques Barzun and Henry Graff.⁶¹ Developing these skills will require some nontraditional thought and investment. MG Flynn's observation while serving in Afghanistan about improving the analytic culture is very fitting, "Doing so will require important cultural changes. Analysts must absorb information with the thoroughness of historians, organize it with the skill of librarians, and disseminate it with the zeal of journalists."⁶²

The policy making community at the DoS, OSD, and National Intelligence Council (NIC) understand and speak the language of academics. The language of international relations theory resonates with them. As Joseph Nye remembers, "When I was working in Washington and helping formulate American foreign policies as an assistant secretary in the State Department and the Pentagon, I found myself borrowing elements from all three types of thinking: realism, liberalism, and constructivism. I found all of them helpful, though in different ways and in different circumstances."⁶³ In this world FA34s will need an unconventional skill set and in this world FA34s will make their mark.

Conclusions

"The Army provides the United States with the land power to prevent, shape, and win in the land domain."⁶⁴ In this, the most complex of domains, the Army must build a competent cadre in the art of strategic intelligence analysis to enhance its contributions across the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multi-national (JIIM) environment. To date, the approximately 250 officers serving in the capacity of the Strategic Intelligence officer have done a remarkable job. But the wars of Iraq and Afghanistan have corrupted the vision and direction of the career field. Years of tactical and

operational fighting have dulled the Army's intelligence ability to think strategically. The Army's MI leadership stands at an important juncture to either reshape the career field or continue the status quo marred by a lack of vision, inefficient allocation and ineffective career development.

Organizational change is always hard, but the time is ripe for the FA34 career field to realize its true potential in shaping the Army's direction. Doing so requires some radical reimagining of the functional area. The first major rebuild is to establish a vision for the career field and regionalize the cadre. This does not entail building a ghost Foreign Area Officer, but rather to compliment the Army's strategic scout with equally qualified strategic intelligence analysts. The second effort requires some creative reallocation of billets while fulfilling the Joint Manning requirements. A focused FA34 career field provides the Army much needed regional experts and skilled analysts. It makes good business sense to match a capability to a requirement. Regionalizing the FA34 field accomplishes that at little to no extra cost.

Endnotes

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